

Center News



Volume 5 Issue 2

A Newsletter for Federal Child Care Centers

Spring 2002

The GSA nationwide network of child care coordinators

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GSA's 13th Annual Child Care Conference "Coming of Age in The Cradle of Liberty" Philadelphia, PA July 9-11, 2002

It is not too late to plan to attend this year's conference. Special training sessions have been planned to address the interests of teachers, directors, board members and facility managers. On the agenda this year is Roger Neugebauer, Editor of "Child Care Information Exchange", everyone's favorite child care magazine. Neugebauer will be addressing early childhood trends as well as center quality and staffing issues. Also featured this year is Jim Greenman author of the popular books "Caring Spaces, Learning Places" and "Places for Childhood". Greenman will have a session on creating early childhood environments as well as participating in our session on lessons learned from September 11th and helping children cope with turbulent times.

Check out our web site at www.gsa.gov/childcare for additional information on the conference and to **register on line**.

The conference will begin on Tuesday morning, 10:30 AM, July 9th and close at 2:00 PM on Thursday, July 11. It will be held at the Philadelphia Marriott, 1201 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA. To make hotel reservations call 800-228-9290 or 800-320-5744 and ask for the "13th Annual GSA Child Care Conference" before the deadline of June 16, 2002. The conference rate is \$118.00 for single or double occupancy plus 14% tax. Registration fees for the conference go up after June 16th so register now.

Des Plaines, Illinois Pre School Teacher is Finalist for the Kohl/McCormick Early Childhood Award

Teacher Nancy Harding with Lutheran General Children's Services from the FAA child care center in Des Plaines, IL was selected as a finalist for the Kohl/McCormick Award. This is an award program in the Chicago metro area (6 counties) which is designed to honor outstanding early childhood education teachers.

Nancy was one of 18 finalists. If Nancy is one of the 5 winners selected she will receive a \$5,000 cash award, \$1,000 award to the classroom, visits and workshops from the Kohl/McCormick Bus, field trips and workshops at the Kohl Children's museum, a graduate level course at Erikson Institute and introduction into the Kohl Academy of Outstanding Educators.

This award is sponsored by the Dolores Kohl Education Foundation and the McCormick Tribune Foundation.





Kevin's Corner

'We shape our dwellings, thereafter our dwellings shape our lives.'

The quote above is a classic: It has been attributed to both Sir Christopher Wren and to Sir Winston Churchill, but that's not the point. What's important is its recognition of the link between the quality of our environment and the quality of our lives - including the quality of our *work* lives.

But if a link between environment and quality of result is self-evident in the adult work world, how much more important is this link in the world of child care! It's a world where the child who enters one of our centers as an infant and stays until kindergarten can easily spend some 12,500 hours of precious, formative years with us.

Lacking words, children at this young age have limited raw material with which to form concepts which they will take with them through life: All they have is the nurture of adults, their interaction with each other and the richness of the environment. Where it comes to the later, they are forced, as the poet says, to rely on "the language of mute things." In fact, the space is that language! And the space directly reinforces interaction with their peers.

And what about the adults who work in the center? Since building positive relationships between adults and children is THE criteria for accreditation, a key GSA measure for this program, how can environment enhance the effectiveness of the caregiver in support of high quality programs? The answer is apparent: GSA can help support care giver effectiveness by ensuring that the environment works consistently in favor of the functional and supervision needs of the staff.

These considerations led to GSA's formulation of the GSA Child Care Design Guide P140, which is the standard for our centers. GSA realized that a Design Guide was necessary to convey child care's specific needs to child care designers and building managers. The Guide has been revised twice and is currently under revision to reflect updated codes, add references to appropriate environmental products and to reflect lessons learned in GSA's some thirteen year experience.

Recommendations of the National Commission on Accreditation Reinvention

In 1999, the NAEYC Governing Board created the National Commission on Accreditation Reinvention to conduct a comprehensive review of NAEYC's Accreditation system, and to recommend changes to prepare for the future and continue the improvement of early childhood education programs.

Over the past two years, the Reinvention Commission solicited extensive input from the early childhood field and other stakeholders; consulted specialists in the fields of accreditation, law and other related areas; and tested innovative accreditation practices. Building on their lengthy deliberations, the Reinvention Commission has presented the NAEYC Governing Board with ten recommendations for the future of the NAEYC Accreditation system. The recommendations are designed to strengthen the reliability and accountability of NAEYC Accreditation - for children and families, for early childhood educators and programs, and for employers, foundations, facilitation projects and others who support the system.

Please remember that these recommendations have yet to be approved by the NAEYC Governing Board. Its deliberations and the process of transitioning to the future system may result in changes to the recommendations.

You can view the recommendations on the NAEYC web site at www.naeyc.org or read them in the May issue of *Young Children*.

You may send comments to the Governing Board by June 15, 2002 by email to reinvention@naeyc.org or by mail to:

Project to Reinvent NAEYC Accreditation
1509 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036.

The Board will consider all comments at their summer meeting, where they will act on the recommendations. These recommendations mark the completion of an important step in the Reinvention, but other steps remain. The future Accreditation system will be announced at the NAEYC Annual Conference in November - and on their Web site - and begin a two-year transition that will include updating the NAEYC Accreditation criteria, serving programs already in self-study, and instituting the recommended changes. The future Accreditation system will be fully operational in 2005.

continued from *Kevin's Corner, column 1*

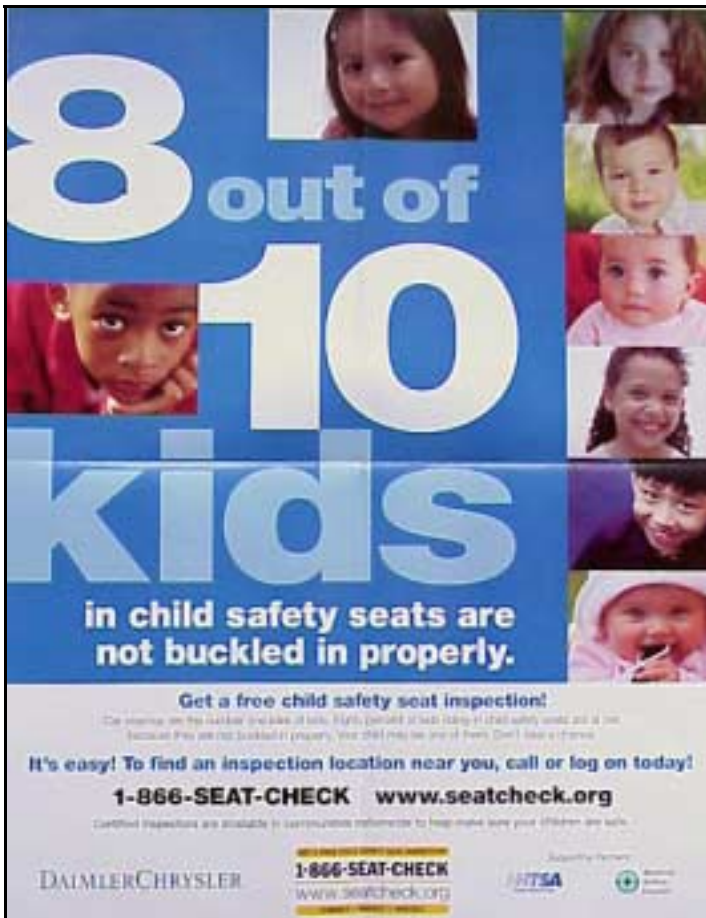
All new centers are built following Design Guide criteria and all existing centers have been or are in the process of being reviewed to note their compliance with the Design Guide criteria. As a result of this review many centers are planning renovations to make needed improvements to their space.

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL LAUNCHES SEAT CHECK AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Whether it's a drive to school or a cross-country family vacation, all parents and caregivers need to be sure children are properly buckled into child safety seats that are appropriate for each child's age and weight. Despite the good intentions of parents and caregivers to protect children by using child safety seats, field studies show that eight out of ten children in safety seats are incorrectly buckled in. Every day, this leaves millions of American children to face the risk of serious injury or death.

Help is available to parents but some just don't know where to find it. The National Safety Council has joined with DAIMLERCHRYSLER Corporation, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and other organizations to launch the first nationwide toll-free hotline (**1-866-SEAT-CHECK**) dedicated exclusively to directing parents to local car seat inspection resources. There are more than 1,500 car seat inspection locations now available nationwide.

Vehicle crashes remain the number one killer of children. Yet, many parents do not even realize their child's safety seat is installed incorrectly. Parents can use the toll free number or the organizations website to find the nearest seat check location. **www.seatcheck.org**



8 out of 10 kids
in child safety seats are not buckled in properly.

Get a free child safety seat inspection!
The money on this number includes at least 10 minutes of free help with your child's seat safety and a lot more. Because they are not buckled in properly, you still may see one of them. Don't lose a chance!

It's easy! To find an inspection location near you, call or log on today!
1-866-SEAT-CHECK www.seatcheck.org

Certified Inspectors are available in communities nationwide to help make sure your children are safe.

DAIMLERCHRYSLER **1-866-SEAT-CHECK** www.seatcheck.org Supporting Partner **NHTSA** Department of Transportation



Fort Snelling, MN Kinderplatz Children Help Dedicate New Conference Center and Celebrate Earth Day

As an integral part of the federal building at Fort Snelling, MN the child care center was asked to participate in the festivities to dedicate a new conference center in the building. The oldest group of children sang, danced and led The Pledge of Allegiance. The other children were able to participate in the festivities by viewing their friends on the large screen TVs. Everyone enjoyed cookies and juice afterwards.

Fort Snelling now boasts a state of the art child care center and conferencing facilities as part of their building amenities.

For Earth Day, GSA displayed a work of art done by the 5-year-old Monarch Butterflies from Kinderplatz. The art piece was entitled "Recycling Engine: Yes, we can!" and was made using recycling materials.



Of the GSA centers eligible for NAEYC Accreditation, 82% are now accredited.

Congratulations to the following centers on their recent reaccreditation:

Sheila Watkins Child Development Center - Department of Energy, Washington, DC - managed by Bright Horizons Family Solutions

Clever Kids Learning Center - Denver, CO - managed by Clever Promotions Inc.

Geo Kids - Menlo Park, CA - managed by Menlo Survey Daycare Center

Kinderplatz Child Care Center - Fort Snelling, MN - managed by Kinderplatz

Coast Guard Center, Washington, DC



Congratulations to the following center on its recent accreditation:

Building Blocks Child Care Center - Auburn, WA - managed by Easter Seals

NEW CENTER OPENS IN INDIANAPOLIS, IN START SMART 4 CHILDREN

GSA recently opened a new child care facility on site at the old Fort Benjamin Harrison base which currently houses the Major General Emmett J. Bean Federal Center just outside of downtown Indianapolis, Indiana. The Federal Center serves Department of Defense tenants primarily DFAS.

The Child Care facility is a free standing building, 11,500 square feet, serving 98 children 6 weeks through kindergarten age. The center has 7 classrooms along with a full service kitchen and administrative space. Each of the rooms looks like a house with its own roofline, window seats, and porch.

The outdoor design incorporates security concerns as well as taking advantage of the space and climate available to design environmentally and developmentally appropriate gardens for the children including a rainwater renewal garden and a crop garden where the children will be able to plant rows of corn, sunflowers and tomatoes.

The center is managed by the Day Nursery Association of Indianapolis; a local nonprofit organization established over 100 years ago whose mission is to assure excellent early care and education for young children in central Indiana. Day Nursery also manages the Federal center in the Minton Capehart Building in downtown Indianapolis.

The child care center is served by its Board of Directors, Start Smart 4 Children Incorporated. This board is made up of volunteers from the MG Emmett J. Bean center. This group is responsible for selecting the management of the center and fundraising to support the center and parents wishing to use the services.

GSA Office of Child Care

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Special Thanks to Cecilia Tracz
for her assistance with the graphics,
formatting and printing of the
newsletter.

*Contributions and Comments
on Center News are welcome
and encouraged.*

